

The Brethren Evangelist

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TERMS

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INSTRUCTIONS

1. Write with pen and ink, and on one side of the paper only.
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Miss Howard Weeden, and "Fairies in Funnyland" combine rhythmic and artistic beauties. The first of a series of journeys "Thru Picturesque America" fills two pages, and "A Successful Country House in New England" and "Wellesley Girls in the Play" are also pictorial features. A fair part of the April Journal is filled with matters of interest to women. By The Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia. One dollar a year; ten cents a copy.

A real repository of helpful hints is *The Preacher's Magazine*, now at hand and brimming full of Easter thoughts and themes. It is a superior number. "The God of Easter, the God of history," a sermon by the Rev. James Houghton, abounds in thoughtfulness. "Easter Day," by the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, contains valuable studies for contemplation. Many and choice "Easter Thoughts and Meditations" fill a large portion of this issue. "An Easter Meditation," by Dr. Joseph Parker, and "A Sketch of Easter" add to the attractiveness of the issue. The Department of Homiletics is rich in suggestions. The Children's Sermon, by the Rev. W. J. Foxell, upon "Man's Ear," is wholesome. "Our Expositor's Note Book," "Counsels to Teachers," "Prayer Topics," and "Easter Thanksgiving," are helpful to teachers and preachers. "Notes and Illustrations" are apt and good. The "Notes on the International Sunday School Lessons," by William E. Ketcham, D. D., the well known Editor of the Magazine, are aids, pointed and excellent, upon the lessons. The outline addresses are upon the Golden Texts, and open many lines of thought. The "Ministerial Table Talks," by Rev. J. J. Pool, upon "Length of Sermons," is concluded, to be followed by talks upon "Pulpit Preparation." The photograph of Rev. John Houghton adorns this April number. Published monthly. Single copy, 15 cents; \$1.50 per year. Wilbur B. Ketcham, Publisher, 7 and 9 West Eighteenth Street, New York.

The Homiletic Review for April comes to our table freighted with just such matter as will stimulate and enrich the preaching of its readers. Bishop John H. Vincent summarizes, as only such a specialist can, "The Century's Progress in Sunday-School Work." After setting forth the march of improvement, he asks the question: "What should we attempt during the coming century?" His suggestive answers will bear careful thought, as forecasting the future. In a

paper of equally wonderful breadth and condensation, on "The Missionary Century," Dr. Frank F. Ellinwood, Senior Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, gives a bird's-eye view of the great century of missionary enterprise now closing.

Dr. Cunningham Geikie discusses, with his usual clearness and force, "Isaiah of Jerusalem as a Preacher of Moral and Religious Reform," while Rev. James C. Fernald treats of "Some Elements of Power in Spurgeon's Preaching;" the two papers thus presenting the sources of power in characteristic types of ancient and modern preachers.

There is the usual freshness and fulness in the Sermonic and other sections of *The Review*.

Thoughtful readers will find special interest in the brief article entitled "Wellhausen on the 'Encyclopedia Biblica,'" in Dr. Stuckenburg's "Religious and Social Thought and Movement at the Close of the Nineteenth Century," and in Dr. Gregory's "More Suggestions Touching 'Christian Science.'" This is the number containing "Easter Sermons, Texts, and Thoughts." The range of illustrative material is of the widest.

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That the need of all may be met and that the substantial value of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Mission title may be preserved for future consideration, the Executive Committee have decided to publish a report under the title Ecumenical Conference: This report will be published in two volumes, handsomely printed and bound. The material will be carefully prepared and edited, so as to exclude nothing essential, and include nothing non-essential, and will be in three parts: 1. The Story of the Conference, its origin, conduct and personnel. 2. Contributions of the Conference, Papers, Addresses, and Discussions. 3. Appendix, including, (1) a list of Foreign Missionary Societies with official addresses; (2) the Organization and Roll of the Conference; (3) a Summary of Missionary Statistics; (4) a Selected Bibliography; and (5) an Index. This Report should be in the hands of every pastor and every missionary worker, and in the library of every Church, Sunday-school and Christian Endeavor Society. It will cast a flood of light on the problem of missions, and it will bear testimony to the power of the gospel to uplift fallen humanity and establish Christian society. That the volumes may be within the reach of all, the retail price has been fixed at \$2.50. Persons subscribing before May 1, will, however, receive them for \$2.00. Send word at once to the Publication Committee, Ecumenical Missionary Conference, Room 823, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

FAILURES IN REVIVAL WORK

J. R. KELLER.

The question arises, are there failures in revival work; we answer yes; and no.

A revival effort may be a failure as far as accessions to the church are concerned; it may be a failure, because the church is not apparently built up and strengthened.

No, they are *not* failures; because these apparent failures will prompt the church to investigate and find the causes, and they will profit by their mistakes and learn lessons by past experiences that will have their effect in the future.

A special revival effort in a church has its place and is necessary to the upbuilding and spiritual good of the cause.

These special efforts, as a special line of subjects are treated from evening to evening awakens an enthusiasm and interest among the members as ordinary services will not do.

A class of people attend and become in-

terested who seldom attend ordinary services, and it is sometimes marvelous how hardened hearts melt in a short time in these revival efforts.

In a meeting this winter a man said to a companion sitting by his side, "They are just continuing these meetings to get me and my wife, but it will be a long time before they get us." A number came forward that night and among them he and his wife.

Another instance of unexpected conversion in a revival meeting occurred a few years ago; and I am personally acquainted with the family. The father very seldom attended services, but he heard of some of his neighbors being converted, and his curiosity was aroused and he and his wife determined to go and see what had brought about such unexpected results; the convicting power of the Holy Spirit took hold of him, and he and his wife were converted and now five of the family are members of the church.

And now I wish to notice some reasons why revival efforts are sometimes almost failures.

First, the church intending to hold a series of meetings lacks prayerful preparation; the members are not in harmony, because of a lack of discipline, and as a result there is discord and contention.

A number has drifted back into the world, some of them not professing to belong to church, yet no action taken by the church.

Others guilty of gross sins yet they are held by the church as members; ask them as to their standing and receive the answer, "I don't know whether I am a member or not."

Now these conditions we find existing; and the church desires to hold a meeting and expects to get the members into fellowship and union;—and those who have drifted away, that they shall renew their vows; and if not, then after the meeting make an effort to settle difficulties and to learn the standing of some who have drifted away;—the very thing that should have been done before an attempt was made to hold a revival.

I have met young people in revival work who were at a loss to know as to their position in the church, whether they were considered *backsliders*, and that it was necessary for them to take steps to be reclaimed and renew their vows; or were they considered members in full fellowship.

A church expecting, or desiring a successful revival should to a large extent know the standing of its members; and by earnest prayer, forbearance, and manifesting the spirit of forgiveness; to bring the church into a union and harmony that means a power. "In union there is strength."

Another cause of failure in revival work, is that they close too soon. So many meetings are only continued two weeks; and it usually takes about that length of time to awaken a deep interest and get the church ready for active work in a revival effort. The successful meetings have been those continued four or five weeks.

Another;—And perhaps the greatest cause of failure in revival effort is, that too many